The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other informational aid of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WHOLE NO. 1535 WILLIAM GREEN, President WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 10, 1940 GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer VOL. 30, NO. 37

FACING the FACTS

With PHILIP PEARL

Within the stately portals of Constitution Hall in Washington there are gathered this week in convention 1,400 delegates representing more than 400,000 workers in the motor transportation industry of the nation.

These men are bound together by loyalty to their country and to their union, the largest in the fold of the American Federation of Labor—the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Stablemen and Helpers of America.

One of the local newspapers described the delegates as "tough." No umbrage should be taken at this characterization. America and the cause of democracy need tough men today, men who are strong and resolute in mind, in body and in devotion to the American way of life.

These men may be tough but they are not toughs. A visit to the convention hall, owned by the Daughters of the American Revolution, convinces us that these delegates are sturdy, keen-minded Americans, alert but orderly, powerful but disciplined.

Nor does one have to judge only by outward appearances. The record of the Teamsters Union speaks for itself. It was organized forty years ago and chartered by the American Federation of Labor with but a handful of members. Today its membership approaches the half-million mark.

Startling Success

Even during the past five years the union's record of accomplishment is startling. In that period it has gained 135,000 members, it has cut down the average hours of work from sixty to forty-eight and it has increased wages of its members by $312,000,000 in the past three years.

These gains were not achieved by magic. It took hard work and plenty of it. And it also took discipline.

In the latter respect, the present status of the union speaks eloquently of the union's efficient leadership. At this writing, there are fewer than 200 members of the Teamsters Union on strike, a record of which any union can be proud.

When one speaks of the leadership of the Teamsters Union, the stalwart figure of Daniel J. Tobin immediately comes to mind. This vigorous, though white-haired, labor leader has been President of the Teamsters Union since 1906 and he has grown in stature as his union has grown in strength.

In recent years many honors and heavy responsibilities have been heaped on Dan Tobin's shoulders. He has accepted the honors modestly and discharged the duties manfully.

No wonder President Green felt called upon in his address to the convention to pay tribute to Dan Tobin for his "great services in the advancement of the cause of labor."

A Tribute From F. D. R.

Perhaps Mr. Tobin's most glorious achievement is the fact that President Roosevelt has agreed to address personally this convention of the Teamsters Union. This is the first time in his two administrations that the President has appeared before a union meeting. Therefore, the President is paying a high compliment to the Teamsters Union and to Dan Tobin personally.

For years there has existed a close friendship between President Roosevelt and Dan Tobin. The President has frequently called upon Mr. Tobin for help and the head of the Teamsters Union has never refused his services.

In 1932 and in 1936 Mr. Tobin worked zealously to elect Roosevelt. In those campaigns he headed the Labor Division of the National Democratic Committee. This year Mr. Tobin is again doing business at the same stand.

To go back for a minute, we recall that in the Spring of 1939 when President Roosevelt urged both the American Federation of Labor and the CIO to reconcile their differences and negotiate a settlement, President Green appointed Mr. Tobin to the A. F. of L. Peace Committee. Mr. Tobin was recognized as the leading proponent of labor peace. But it happened that he was overburdened with the work of his own union at the time and he declined the appointment. So important did President Roosevelt regard his services, that he appealed to Mr. Tobin to reconsider. Mr. Tobin could no longer refuse under such circumstances and he did serve. It is no reflection upon him that the conferences failed to bring about a settlement. Mr. Tobin strove desperately to prevail upon the CIO group to agree to a reasonable settlement. Along with other negotiators representing both the A. F. of L. and the CIO, Mr. Tobin failed to budge the obdurate refusal of John L. Lewis to consider any fair proposal.

A few months ago Mr. Tobin was appointed by the President to serve as his administrative assistant in the White House to promote labor cooperation with the national defense program. Mr. Tobin did this job quickly and well and has now resigned to resume direction of Democratic political activities among labor groups.

It seems to us that Dan Tobin is typical of the union he heads—a resolute fighter for his convictions, a loyal trade-unionist and a courageous patriot. We wish him and the convention of the Teamsters Union every success.

Fire Fighters Ask President's Aid To Survey Fire Services For Defense

Washington, D. C.—As a national defense measure, the International Association of Fire Fighters urged President Roosevelt to order an immediate survey of the adequacy of fire services throughout the nation.

The AFL union pointed out the important defense role played by fire departments of cities that would have been attacked with incendiary bombs.

In a letter to the President, George J. Richardson, secretary-treasurer of the Fire Fighters, said:

"In modern warfare the fire service of a nation must perform a service to the citizens of the country even more vitally important than that performed during normal times, and in order that the fire service may be properly trained and equipped to perform this service to the greatest possible degree of skill and efficiency, it is imperative that there should be made available to those responsible for the nation's defense the most complete information and the most comprehensive knowledge of the fire service that it is possible to secure.

"It is our belief that for the purpose of accomplishing of the fire technical committee for the fi. service is necessary. Such a committee would have as its function an exhaustive study of the methods of fire defense under conditions of modern warfare, to the end that the methods and practices which, as a result of the experience in other countries, have been proven to be the most efficient and practical may be recommended for use by fire operation in the United States."

Richardson also informed the President that the union is preparing to adopt a resolution endorsing the national defense program at its next convention, which opens in Des Moines, Iowa, on Sept. 16.

No Strikes and No Sabotage on TVA Is Loyal Pledge of A. F. L. Workers

Knoxville, Tenn.—The Tennessee Valley Trades and Labor Council, representing more than 10,000 American Federation of Labor members working on TVA projects, unanimously adopted a resolution pledging "full-hearted" support of the national defense program and promising to root out "every form of sabotage and subversive influence."

Chairman H. A. Morgan of the TVA and David Lilienthal, head, that warmly praised the cooperation of the fifteen AFL unions which recently signed a history-making contract with the TVA. Lilienthal said in a letter to President S. D. Roper of the Tennessee Valley Trades and Labor Council:

"It makes me very proud as a citizen of the United States to read the resolution of the Tennessee Valley Trades and Labor Council. That is a fine, patriotic and sincere statement that all I hope we in the TVA can live up to the standard you have set. We are determined to do so."

The resolution adopted by the council follows:

"In view of the fact that a national situation has arisen in which can patriotism and Unionism."

5,500,000 Idle Workers Available For Jobs In Defense Industries

Washington, D. C.—The National Defense Commission said that 5,500,000 now idle workers are available for the nation's defense industries.

This number has been registered through offices affiliated with the United States Employment Service. The registration is broken down so that the number of workers available for any particular trade or skill is compiled for each locality.

The labor inventory was part of a three-phase program for meeting manpower shortages as the defense industries expand. Combined with it is a Government-industry co-operative program for training men in industrial plants and a vocational training program for schools.

The commission is building a reservoir of skilled labor through training programs in the National Youth Administration, the Civilian Conservation Corps and the W. P. A. The N. Y. A. program has 68,000 learning defense trades, the C. C. C. 300,000 and the W. P. A. 25,000.

The Civil Service Commission is recruiting 100,000 skilled civilian workers for navy yards, arsenals and other defense establishments.

In another field of defense personnel activity, Gill Robb Wilson, president of the National Aeronautic Association, proposed creation of a civil air reserve of pilots to form a nonessential auxiliary to air defence. These fliers, beyond the age of military fliers, would be valuable to provide information, transportation, observation patrol and disaster relief in the event of emergency, Wilson said.

Jimmy Walker Named New Arbiter Of Ladies' Cloak and Suit Trade

New York, N. Y.—Former Mayor James J. Walker was designated by Mayor La Guardia to serve as impartial chairman of industrial and labor relations in the women's coat and suit industry at an annual salary of $20,000. The Mayor made his selection at the request of officers of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and four employer associations, after independent efforts to agree on the choice of an impartial chairman for the $260,000,000-a-year industry had failed.

The announcement met with quick approval from David Dubinsky, president of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union.

"We are gratified with the Mayor's designation of former Mayor Walker for this important industrial post," Mr. Dubinsky said. "We are confident that Mr. Walker's wide executive experience will aid him in approaching and solving the complicated problems affecting the coat and suit industry, one of the largest in the metropolis. I welcome Mr. Walker in behalf of the union in his new position as industrial arbitrator, pledging him our full cooperation. I likewise wish to thank Mayor La Guardia for his sustained interest in the affairs of our industry and for his wise selection, which I trust will meet with the unanimous approval of all its factors."

As impartial chairman of the industry, Mr. Walker will decide disputes which arise and will rule on matters upon which the parties could not agree when the new contract was signed in July. About 2,000 companies and 85,000 cloak-and-suit workers will be under Mr. Walker's jurisdiction.

A. F. L. Legislative Bureau Blocks Cuts In Ship Workers Standards

Washington, D. C.—Prompt action by the Legislative Bureau of the American Federation of Labor squelched a new attempt in Congress to slash known labor standards under cover of national defense.

The latest attack on labor's gains was made by Rep. Hall introducing Congressman Schuyler Otis Bland, Virginia Democrat.

Bland's measure sought to suspend the eight-hour day at all shipyards doing work for the United States. The Maritime Commission and allow unlimited extra hours of work without overtime rates of pay.

Furthermore, it would have given the commission blanket power to alter existing contracts for the construction of vessels—thus making it possible, labor officials feared, for the government to wreak vengeance between unions and private shipbuilding companies.

William C. Hushing, chairman of the AFL Legislative Bureau, led the fight against the bill at hearings before the Merchant Marine Committee of the House. Despite the fact that Bland is chairman of this committee, Hushing's fight brought quick results. The committee yielded to the union demands, and instructed representatives of the Maritime Commission, and the shipbuilders, who were present, to get together and redraft the bill along the lines demanded by labor.

Express Clerks Win 44-Hour Week As Union and Company End Dispute

New York, N. Y.—Full settlement of the Railway Express Agency and the Brotherhood of Railway Clerks covering the recent strike of 30,000 members of the union.

In a joint statement L. O. Head, general manager of the company board appointed by President Roosevelt were made public today and that all points disputed points had been "satisfactorily adjusted."

"Having reached a satisfactory mutual understanding with respect to all these matters the company and union officials said, "the public can be assured that there will be no interruption of express service, and both the employes and the management solicit the continued patronage and support of the shipping public."

The principal recommendation put forward by the emergency board was a reduction in work hours from forty-eight to forty-four a week for 28,000 employes. Previously the opposing sides had been unable to agree on a formula for putting the proposal into practice.

BUILDING TRADES SIGN UP CONTRA COSTA CONCERNS

Richmond, Calif.—Only A. F. L. building trades men will be employed by members of the Contra Costa Contractors Association according to terms of a contract signed between the contractors organization and the Contra Costa Building and Construction Trades Council, it was announced by Albin L. Peterson, secretary-treasurer of the AFL Council.

"The agreement," Peterson said, "is a continuous one and can be reopened by either party after thirty days by working conditions thirty days prior to any year ending July 1.

"Besides a closed AFL shop, the agreement includes provisions for payment of prevailing union wage scales, adoption of the work rules in jurisdictional disputes, observance of union hours and working conditions, and arbitration by a large panel on any disputes which may arise that are not covered by the agreement.

2300 CIGAR MAKERS WIN , PAY RISE IN JACKSONVILLE

Jacksonville, Fla.—A closed shop agreement was cut on an unorganized strike, called upon the Cigar Makers' International Union for assistance, perience will aid him in approaching and solving the complicated problems affecting the coat and suit industry, one of the largest in the metropolis. I welcome Mr. Walker in behalf of the union in his new position as industrial arbitrator, pledging him our full cooperation. I likewise wish to thank Mayor La Guardia for his sustained interest in the affairs of our industry and for his wise selection, which I trust will meet with the unanimous approval of all its factors."

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GLOVE TRADE LEARNERS GET 25-CENT PAY FLOOR

Washington, D. C.—Learners may be employed in the glove branch of the apparel industry for not more than 480 hours at a wage of 25c per hour by an order issued by Col. Philip B. Fleming, Administrator of Wages and Hour Division, United States Department of Labor.

The order provides for the issuance of special certificates permitting the employment of learners, to the extent of not more than 5 per cent of the total number of workers engaged in given operations in any plant.

A "learner" is a person who has not been employed during the preceding three years for more than 480 hours in the aggregate on specified glove operations.

The glove branch of the apparel industry is defined as including leather dress gloves, knit fabric gloves, work gloves and knit wool gloves.

A condition of the issuance of special certificates for employment of learners at subminimum wages is that experienced workers are not available.

In plants where experienced operators are paid on a piecework basis, learners shall be paid at least the same piecework rates and shall receive earnings paid at this rate, if they earn in excess of 25c per hour.

News Briefs

WORKERS ARE PROTECTED IN TRANSPORTATION LAW

Washington, D. C.—The Senate approved by a vote of 59 to 15 a bill to bring inland and coastal water carriers under Federal regulation similar to that now covering motor and rail transportation. The bill, which now only requires President Roosevelt's signature to be a law, would necessitate compensation up to four years for workers who might be displaced by sanitary for air defence. These fliers, beyond the age of military fliers, would be valuable to provide information, transportation, observation patrol and disaster relief in the event of emergency, Wilson said.

SCHOOLS TRAIN THOUSANDS FOR DEFENSE EMPLOYMENT

Washington, D. C.—Paul V. McNutt, Federal Security Administrator, said reports gathered from forty-one States show that the training of workers in vocational schools in 283 cities is one of the most swiftly moving phases of the national defense program.

Mr. McNutt sent to the National Defense Advisory Commission a report from John W. Studebaker, United States Commissioner of Education, on the vocational education part of the national defense program which said that 80,614 persons had enrolled for defense training in one month. Already 3,000 men have been placed in jobs.

WORKERS IN U. S. RUBBER COMPANY PLANT ORGANIZED

Winnsboro, S. C.—Employes of the United States Rubber Company's textile plant here have formed a local union and applied to the United Textile Workers of America for a charter. Gordon Chastain, president of the Southern Cotton Textile Federation, AFL, Pollard, first vice president of the United Textile Workers of America, and other UTWofA. officers assisted in the launching of the plant in forming the new local union which promises to become one of the strongest textile locals in the state.

FEWER WORKERS INVOLVED IN INDUSTRIAL DISPUTES

Washington, D. C.—More than 440,000 fewer workers took part in industrial disputes handled by the Conciliation Service for the Department of Labor in the fiscal year ending June 30, 1940, than in the previous fiscal year, Secretary of Labor Frances Perkins reported. The 1940 total was 1,341,340 as compared with 1,455,875, in 1939.

The number of disputes in the 1940, fiscal year was 1,977 against 1,678 in the previous period, her report said. Idleness activities showed: Altogether, the Service handled 3,761 situations involving 1,145,205 workers and 1,341,340 man-days idleness; and 1,636,543 workers in the previous fiscal year.

ESPIONAGE DETECTION LAW IN NEW YORK EMPHASIZED

New York, N. Y.—As an aid in the detection of possible espionage or sabotage in industrial plants engaged on defense contracts, Industrial Commissioner Frieda S. Miller advised New York State firms handling such orders of their right under section 1279 of the penal law to adopt distinctive badges or other identifying insignia approved by the Commissioner, to be displayed by employees. Persons wearing such badges or imitations thereof, without permission of the Commissioner, will be guilty under this section of misdemeanors.

STRIKE SETTLED AT HENRY GRADY HOTEL IN ATLANTA

Atlanta, Ga.—An agreement has been signed between the Henry Grady Hotel, the Operating Engineers and the Atlanta Federation of Trades, which establishes a 40-hour week for engineers from 80 hours a week to 86 hours, and an increase in pay of $35.00 a month, with a week's vacation with pay. Contained in the agreement is a clause which states that the management of the hotel has no objections to the organization of all other local trades and labor unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor.

N. Y. KNITGOODS UNION GAINS PAID VACATIONS

New York, N. Y.—Twenty-five hundred members of the Knitgoods Workers Union, Local 155, of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, A. F. of L., voted to ratify its terms of a new agreement with the United Knitwear Manufacturers League. The new contract provides for no change in wages or hours but introduces one week's vacation with pay.

Labor Must Work and Stand Together For Defense of Democracy, Says Green

WORKERS WIN IN BOEING DISPUTE

Contract Ends Strike Threat and Wage Cut Demands.

Washington, D. C.—A signed contract between the International Association of Machinists and the Boeing Aircraft Corporation in Seattle ended a serious strike threat.

The agreement was a sweeping victory for the union in its fight against company attempts to impose a wage cut.

Because the Boeing company is engaged in national defense production, President Harvey Brown, of the Machinists, made two flying trips to Seattle in an effort to settle the dispute. He expressed gratification at the successful outcome of the negotiations and the fact that operations of the plant were not tied up.

The management, after stubbornly rejecting union proposals, finally accepted a peace plan under which the union's wage scales and other gains were maintained, and various unsolved grievances were to be arbitrated.

However, arbitration was avoided when the management consented to take controversial points at the round table in conference with the union.

TEAMSTERS MEET IN HALL BARRED TO C. I. O. MINERS

Washington, D. C.—Constitution Hall in Washington, where the fourteenth convention of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Stablemen and Helpers of America is meeting, is owned by the Daughters of the American Revolution. When Lewis's United Mine Workers of America applied for the hall for its convention here in 1938, the D. A. R. refused the C.I.O. affiliate the use of the hall.

RELIEF ROLLS SLASH VISIONED FROM DRAFT

Washington, D. C.—Federal relief agencies estimated that their rolls would be reduced nearly a half percent as a result of proposed peacetime conscription.

Work Projects Administration statisticians estimated W. P. A. rolls would be no more than 9 per cent; the Civilian Conservation Corps placed its probable reduction at 10 per cent and the National Youth Administration predicted about 5 per cent of its employes would go to the Army.

C. C. C. has on its rolls approximately 300,000 boys and N. Y. A., 264,000 boys and girls between the ages of 18 and 24.

C. C. C. estimated that only 3,000 actually would be called under the draft as passed by the Senate. Nearly all C. C. enrollees are single.

Apparently, the N. Y. A. will be least affected, having only about 44,000 unrollees over 21.

D. C. UNIONS OPPOSE ONE-MAN STREET CARS

Washington, D. C.—Frank J. Coleman, secretary of the Washington Central Labor Council, expressed opposition to the application of the Capital Transit Company for permission to install "one-man" type street cars to one-man operation at hearings held by the Public Utilities Commission.

Referring to the commission's refusal to grant previous company application of the company Mr. Coleman said: "It is our hope that you will participate in the hearings and believe that the old type street car is safer for one man operation, and as such is a menace to both operators and the traveling public."

PENNSYLVANIA JOBLESS BENEFIT PAYMENTS DROP

Harrisburg, Pa.—A decline in volume of benefit payments and an increase in job placement activities were reported by the Pennsylvania Bureau of Employment and Unemployment Compensation in the week ending August 23, Secretary of Labor and Industry Lewis G. Hines announced. Original claims for job insurance payments fell 7 per cent to 8,620 a new 1940 low, and 24 per cent below the volume of the average week in July.

U. S. PLANS 3,100 MILES OF NEW DEFENSE HIGHWAYS

Washington, D. C.—Approximately 3,100 miles of new roads to link 130 vital defense posts with the nation's highway network will be built, Federal Works Administrator John M. Carmody announced. He said detailed plans for these new roads are being developed now, while the 76,000-mile main highway system is being surveyed for the President. The roads will cost about $300,000,000.

Tells Teamsters AFL Will Support Conscription if It Becomes Law

Washington, D. C.—President William Green of the American Federation of Labor in a stirring address before the convention of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters appealed to every worker in the United States to help make the national defense program a success and prove to the world that democracy is superior to totalitarianism.

Rousing the 1,400 delegates to a high pitch of patriotism, Mr. Green evoked enthusiastic cheers when he declared:

"We are not opposed to conscription if the country needs the manpower. When the legislation is passed by Congress and approved by the President, we'll support it and we will carry it out.

"We need to think together, to work together and to stand together as never before in defense of democracy and in defense of America.

"If there is one appeal I want to make to every worker in America, it is never to slacken down, never to stop work, and never to interrupt, insofar as that is possible, the progress of the national defense program, so that we may show the world that democracy works and that it is superior to the totalitarian form of government."

Mr. Green told the delegates of the great sacrifices made by the workers in Great Britain and urged that this country extend every aid, short of war, to England. The convention rocked with applause when he added:

"We favor whole-heartedly the fine deal made by the President of the United States with Great Britain to exchange fifty overage destroyers for naval and air bases to defend the Western Hemisphere."

Refuting attacks on the President by John L. Lewis, Mr. Green flatly declared that "no man in America has more sincerely and earnestly applied himself to the task of finding a solution for unemployment than has the President."

Mr. Green emphasized the need for labor peace and concluded his address with the statement that the A. F. of L. is ready now and at any time in the future to sit down and negotiate a settlement of the differences with the CIO. He insisted that the CIO has refused to negotiate.

Other pleas for labor unity came from Secretary of Labor Perkins and Daniel J. Tobin, President of the Teamsters Union. Miss Perkins praised Mr. Tobin's efforts in behalf of peace.

In his annual report, Mr. Tobin warned that unless labor peace is attained the Government may step in and force a showdown.

In the past five years, Mr. Tobin declared, the Teamsters Union has gained 135,000 members and is now the largest union in the A. F. of L. fold. Since 1935, he said, the average working hours of the union's members have been reduced from sixty to forty-eight a week. By the next convention, he predicted, a forty-hour week would be attained. He estimated that the union had won wage increases aggregating $312,000,000 in three years.

Other speakers at the opening day of the convention in Constitution Hall were Joseph Keenan, Secretary-Treasurer of the A. F. of L. and I. M. Ornburn, secretary of the Union Label Trades Department.

AFL INSURANCE AGENTS SIGN UP EQUITABLE CO.

Washington, D. C.—The Equitable Life Insurance Company of the District of Columbia and the Industrial and Ordinary Insurance Agents' Union No. 21264 signed an agreement covering the insurance agents employed by the company in the District of Columbia, following an NLRB election won by the union several months ago. Substantial improvements in working conditions defined by the contract include increases in compensation, vacation with pay, five-day week, arbitration of disputes or grievances. A special provision requires that agents now members of the union or those who become members during the life of the contract must remain in good standing with the union, whose membership now includes about 95 per cent of the agents in the District of Columbia.

The negotiations were carried on by A. F. of L. representatives Frank Wetzel, George L. Rose, and Ralph U. Boyer, together with Frank Sheehan, commissioner of conciliation of the District of Columbia. Mr. Wetzel in commenting on the agreement said: "We consider this one of our finest insurance agents' agreements. Improved working conditions have resulted through true collective bargaining. A very fine spirit existed between the Board of Directors of the Equitable Life Insurance Company and our union representatives at all times during the negotiations."

CHARLOTTE, N. C., GETS FIRST LOW-RENT HOUSING

Charlotte, N. C.—Fairview Homes, low-rent housing project of the Charlotte, N. C., housing authority, was dedicated in ceremonies at which J. Wilbur Brougham of Raleigh, Democratic nominee for Governor, was the principal speaker. Fairview Homes, the first United States Housing Authority project here, will contain dwelling units for 452 Negro families.